



MAYOR'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL AND CITIZENS OF GREENCASTLE May 1, 2023

Luncheon with Franklin County and Hagerstown, MD mayors: On April 3, I had the pleasure of lunching with Franklin County mayors along with the Mayor of Hagerstown, Tekesha Martinez. We discussed mutual challenges and possible future partnerships. One project we hope to jointly partner with will be a saturation public information campaign for citizens to “shop small” in our respective communities. For decades, it’s been a pleasure to see cars in Greencastle with Maryland license plates, be it downtown, or at one of our markets or specialty stores, shopping. Today, as I’m on the street, I say hello and thank them for visiting Greencastle.

Supporting Month of the Young Child (April) readings: I had the pleasure to read to First Start Partnerships students at the Evangelical Lutheran Church on April 18.

National Day of Prayer: Observance this Thursday, May 6, at 11:00 A.M. at the Greencastle Presbyterian Church

National Police Officer’s Week: In 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15 falls, as National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. National Police Week is a collaborative effort of many organizations dedicated to honoring America’s law enforcement community.

Attendance at the Franklin / Cumberland Counties Borough’s Assn. meeting: Last Tuesday, April 25, I attended the Association meeting along with Council member Duane Kinzer in Shippensburg. Interesting discussions included the Franklin County property assessment last performed in 1961. Following a delicious meal, the program was given by Tom Moriarty, a critical incident debriefing specialist, that has performed services throughout Pennsylvania and at Ground Zero following the Sept. 2001 attack in New York City. He stressed the point of municipalities being prepared to support all employees, from public safety to public works if they have to deal with a catastrophic incident while at work. As reported recently by Police Chief John Phillippy, several officers and staff have been trained in crisis intervention training (CIT) and support. The Franklin County system is on call to support those involved in catastrophic incidents. Chief Phillippy has responded to incidents (on his own time) as a trained member of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) support team. Mr. Kinzer and I committed to Greencastle hosting the next Borough’s Assn. meeting in Greencastle on September 26, 2023 at a location to be determined. The only cost is for the individual meals ordered from the location’s menu.

Memorial Day parade and ceremony: Monday, May 29, with the parade forming at 10:00 A.M. proceeding to Cedar Hill Cemetery for the official ceremony.

Norfolk Southern report: Larry Pittman reports approximately five sustained idling incidents by N/S locomotives. Some are now pulling and staying toward the south end of Greencastle into Antrim Township. (see Antrim Township minutes).

Intersection of S. Antrim Way (SR0011) and Williamsport Pike (PennDot highways): This very busy intersection occasionally sees its share of motor vehicle crashes. The highway system was designed in the early 1950s' and was built in 1955. The area is seeing much heavier traffic with regional growth including much residential expansion in the area of Williamsport Pike southwest of Greencastle. When I managed Antrim Township we worked with PennDot to reconfigure a similar intersection of SR0011 at S. Washington Street where the single lanes (2) access were removed with a true 90 degree design constructed by PennDot. Is it time for the Borough of Greencastle to request such a study at the Williamsport Pike intersection?

Previous requests to Council by the Mayor:

Downtown truck traffic will continue to increase as regional warehousing / supply chain structures continue to be built. I recommend a letter be authorized to the PA DEPT. of TRANSPORTATION suggesting a traffic study designating Baltimore Street for "local truck traffic only." Baltimore Street should not be a through road for heavy trucks exiting I-81 Interchange #5, passing through our downtown, for points west, north, and south. I-81 exits 3 and 10 should be utilized for Route 11 as this was built as a "by-pass" on the west end of Greencastle in 1955. We were successful for the South Washington Street "local truck traffic" designation. Let's support our Baltimore Street residents and our downtown businesses with this request.

I encourage the Council to review what is stated in our comprehensive plans regarding downtown parking to benefit all of our businesses. Section 7-8 of the G-A / School District Comprehensive Plan dedicates information recommending the following..." Develop a comprehensive downtown parking strategy and management plan." It further states that "One of the most common misconceptions is that there is not enough parking available in the downtown, and that the lack of parking is prohibiting the downtown from being as vibrant and successful as it could be if additional parking opportunities were available. In order to successfully manage parking resources, it is necessary to evaluate existing conditions, implement short term improvements, and develop a long-term plan for the management of parking facilities in the downtown."

Parking meters came to downtown Greencastle in 1953. The current meters are being scavenged for parts to keep the current meters in service. An off-street parking inventory may be warranted...even a public / private partnership for modern "smart pay parking" areas designated with proper signage where revenues may be shared with private property owners. These areas would be numbered, and you pay at centralized stations by credit card or cash. I don't know what such a system costs, however, it's worth exploring and seeing a smart system demonstration of the system for long range parking system planning.

Public comments regarding parking spaces in close proximity to Center Square: When parking issues are reviewed by Council, I recommend consideration of ordaining the closest metered parking spaces to center square be designated as "compact car" or "passenger cars only; no trucks or SUVs" to enhance visibility by and to pedestrians attempting to cross East and West Baltimore Street.

Respectfully submitted: *Ben Thomas, Jr. Mayor*